

The Impact of Instructional Supervision on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract.

This study examined the Impact of Instructional Supervision on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State with reference to Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE). Five research questions were used to guide the study to a rational conclusion. Descriptive Survey method was adopted in which Instructional Supervision and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (ISSAPQ) were used to obtain relevant data from 92 teachers in 37 selected Senior Secondary schools using the simple random sampling techniques. Pearson product moment correlational statistics (Pearson r) and t-test at 0.05 level of significance was used to analyse the data generated and answer the research questions. The study show that regular instructional supervision using robust supervision strategies like checking of students' notebooks, classroom visitation/inspection by school administrators, checking teachers' lesson plan/notes and inspection of teachers record keeping have significant correlation with teachers' performance and academic achievement of students in Secondary Schools. Recommendations like proper alignment of government policies with educational needs of the society, provision of adequate and relevant instructional materials for teaching, regular in-service training for teachers' capacity development, depoliticization of the free education programmes and proper evaluation of school administrative procedures and educational outcomes were adduced for remediation.

Keywords: Students Academic Performance, Instructional Supervision, Secondary School

Introduction.

Education remains the biggest instrument for academic progress, social mobilization, political survival and effective national development of any country, it constitutes the largest enterprise/industry in Nigeria that is why, the government continues to ensure that funds, school facilities, instructional materials, teaching personnel and a beneficial learning environment are made available for the sector in Nasarawa State. The state Government has also continuously encouraged secondary education by adopting a social demand approach towards planning the education sector by subsidizing the SSCE fee in the state since 2012 in line with Archibong's (2013) position that quality education does not just occur miraculously but can be achieved through continuous improvement efforts by the stakeholders in the education enterprise.

In recent times, education stakeholders have expressed their concern over the poor performance of students in the SSCE. Some blamed the school administrators (principals) and the teachers while some blamed the students themselves and the parents. Whoever to be blamed, the fact remains that, the school and its organizational management has correlation with the academic achievement of the students. (Olaleye, 2013).

Sule (2013) in a response to critics on the quality of education and as a measure of improvement on the glaring downward trend on educational achievement opined that school supervision (internal or external) has become a veritable instrument for checking teachers' job performance.

Instructional supervision occupies a unique place in the entire education system and it becomes absolutely expedient to give it prominent attention. In a contemporary Nigeria, instructional supervision is regarded as the process of enhancing the professional growth of the teachers, the curriculum and improving the techniques of teaching in the classroom through democratic interactions between the Teacher and the Supervisor (Okendu, 2012).

Nakpodia (2006) asserts that, instructional supervision in the modern era centers on the improvement of the teaching-learning situation to the benefits of both the teachers and learners, helps in the identification of areas of strength and weaknesses of teachers, follow-up activities that should be directed at the improvement of identified areas of teachers' weaknesses and give recognition to the teachers and create a cordial working atmosphere based on good human relations.

National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN, 2006) observed that Supervision provides opportunities for teachers to be groomed through critical study of instructional processes and classroom interactions to carry out their teaching tasks in line with professional codes of conduct. If schools are not supervised adequately, it will have inimical effects on the students' output and the educational objectives may not be achieved, consequently various instructional supervisory techniques should be employed to ensure qualitative and quantities service delivery by the teachers.

Since Instructional supervision constitutes the leverage point for instructional improvement, teacher's

competence and efficiency of the educational system while an unsupervised instruction may mar the standard of education, it is therefore suggested that principals as catalysts should facilitate the implementation of the various sets of instructional activities geared towards an effective, viable, vibrant and qualitative educational system that will improve the teaching-learning situation in the input - process - output framework without which the educational endeavors may be an exercise in futility.(Archibong,2010)

Instructional process and supervision help a lot in improving academic performance of students. This is because supervision of instruction aims at enhancing teaching and learning through proper guidance and planning, and devising ways of improving teachers professionally and thereby helping them release their creative abilities so that through them the instructional process is improved and well articulated.(Okendu,2012)

NOUN (2004) Conceptualizes School administration as a social process concerned with identifying, maintaining, stimulating, controlling and unifying formally or informally organized human and material energies within an interpreted system. School administration is specifically concerned with students, teachers, rules & regulations and policies that govern the school system. School administration is a difficult task involving sensitive and challenging functions relating to the supervision of students, school personnel, instructional programme, school plants and statutory records.

In the school system, supervision is as antique as the teaching profession and has undergone series of evolution since the colonial era. It is directed towards sustaining and ameliorating the teaching-learning process in the educational system because education plays an essential role in the growth and development of any nation socially, politically, and economically (NOUN, 2006).

Alimi and Akinfolarin (2012) admitted that in Nigeria, Secondary Schools, irrespective of their location and ownership are expected to function in compliance with the achievement of the national education objectives, and consequently aspire to brilliant performance in the final examination. As -such, students' performance greatly depends on the quality of instruction and education they have gained in school.

Every educational system at every level depends heavily on teachers for the execution of its programmes. In this regard, Obadara (2005) viewed teachers to be highly essential for a successful operation of the educational system and as a key to the educational development. Without teachers with relevant behavioral traits, educational facilities cannot be used to facilitate academic performance of students. Undoubtedly the success and quality of any educational system depend on the quality of teachers input into the system.

For many years, educators, administrators or managers, researchers have debated over which variables influence student's academic performance. A growing body of evidence suggests that schools can make a great difference in terms of students' academic performance and a substantial portion of that difference is attributable to teachers, thus there should be a link between teacher behavioral traits, teacher competence, and teacher productivity and students academic performances. (Fehintola, 2014)

The enormity and critical nature of educational challenges in Nigeria is evident in the increasing poor performance of students in national examinations such as WAEC and NECO. In this regard, Akinola (2010) observed that, out of 1,351,557 candidates who sat for May/June 2010 WAEC in the country, only 337,071 candidates representing 24.94 percent obtained credits in English Language, Mathematics and three other subjects. In addition, Amuche and Fan (2014) reported that candidates who obtained credit passes in five subjects and above including English language and Mathematics during the May/June 2012 NECO examination in 19 states in the north as follows: Yobe1.5%, Gombe 4.2%, Adamawa 5.26%, Kebbi 7.44%, Bauchi 9.2%, Zamfara9.5%, Sokoto 10.69%, Katsina10.74%, Jigawa 13.3%, Borno 13.8%, Kwara 17.6%, Taraba 18.25%, Kano 22.71%, Niger 23.27%, Plateau 25.98%, Nasarawa 29.9% , Benue 37.80%, Kogi 40.18% and Kaduna 44.4%.The apparent low performances does not satisfy the yearnings and aspiration of Nigeria as rightly observed by Ogunsaju (2004) who asserted that the academic standard in all Nigerian educational institutions has fallen considerably below societal expectations..

This dismal performance connotes a problem to Nasarawa State and the country in general because there will be a dislocation in the human capital supply chain at the Secondary level of the education sector. The disruption in the overall manpower supply for the economy constitutes a grave threat to Nigeria's aspiration to be among the top twenty economies in the World by the year 2020 through vision: 20:2020.

The future of every country lies on how it invests in the development, awareness, and productivity of its citizens. This investment is primarily done through education. It is in recognition of the above fact that Governments at all levels in Nigeria commits a lot of resources to ensure the provision of quality education to its citizenry and as well tailored its policies towards ensuring that quality education is made available and accessible to the general population.

In spite of the efforts of the Government and relevant stakeholders in repositioning Nigeria education on the world map, the nation's educational system from the mid 1980s have continued to experience some set back in school management and decline in both the teachers performance and students academic achievement resulting in the present day objectionable colossal failure by Students in the career determining examinations conducted by reputable government agencies like: JAMB, NABTEB, WAEC and NECO (Ayegba, 2009)

The declining results from school in terms of learning achievement, attitudes, values and other effective measures in comparison with the huge investment in the sector are quite alarming. The main thrust of the study therefore, is to establish the extent of relationship between Instructional Supervision and academic Performance of students of Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State.

Statement of the Problem.

Education is a sound investment that is expected to enhance economic growth of individuals and the society. It is a known fact that education is a strong factor of social mobility which implies that education has the ability to influence a person's future economic status in the society.

Disappointingly, this all important sector is faced with myriad of problems. Prominent among the problem area that brings to light the poor show of the sector is the abysmal outing of students in SSCE. The woeful performance in WAEC and NECO has been a source of worry to Parents and other stakeholders in the Sector considering the resources Parents and Government invest in educating the learners without any commensurate performance to match the vast investment.

Nasarawa state shares in this predicament of the education sector in spite of the financial involvement of State Government in the Sector. There is a growing concern of the society about the realization of secondary education objectives due to doubt that there have been steady decline in teachers' instructional task performance and students' academic performance which depicts non-realization of quality assurance in secondary schools (Adeniji,2002).

The performance of students in the SSCE administered by WAEC and NECO in the recent has indicated a massive failure rate of 72,74,74 and 75 percent in 2008,2009,2010,2011 respectively (Ugochi,2011). This trend of failure by students and a sign of poor job performance by teachers is unacceptable to relevant stakeholders of the education sector in Nasarawa state considering the towering investment on education.

More worrisome is Ugochi's (2011) finding that out of 102 secondary schools selected across the Federation for evaluation using the quality assurance instrument for Basic and Secondary Education in Nigeria, only 6 schools were rated good,28 schools fair,65 schools poor and 3 were rated very poor. The rating evaluation of leadership and management in the schools indicated that none of the schools was outstanding while 13 were rated good,51 adjudged fair and 37 very poor.

In the light of the highlighted problems, the study provided answers to the research questions with a view to proffering pragmatic measures that have remarkable influence on improving the teachers job performance and academic achievement of secondary school students in Nasarawa State and Nigeria in general.

Purpose of the Study.

The study is conducted to specifically,

- (i) To establish the relationship between Instructional Supervision and students academic performance in SSCE.
- (ii) To ascertain if Instructional Supervision is regularly carried out in Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State.
- (iii) To establish the influence of Instructional Supervision on Teachers' performance in Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State.
- (iv) To adduce recommendations on strategies to improve Supervision of the Teaching-Learning process, and the general performance of students in Secondary Schools of Nasarawa State.

Research Questions.

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent does regular supervision have relationship with student's academic performance in Secondary School?
2. What is the relationship between class visitations by principals and students academic performance in Secondary School?
3. To what extent does a Positive or negative remarks by Supervisors have impact on Teacher's Job Performance
4. To what extent does regular instructional supervision have relationship with teacher's performance in Secondary Schools in Nasarawa state?
5. How frequent is instructional supervision conducted in your school?

Research Hypotheses.

- HO1. Regular instructional supervision has no significant relationship with student's academic performance in Secondary School.

- HO2. There is no significant relationship between class visitations by Principals and students academic performance in Secondary School.
- HO3. Positive or negative remarks by Supervisors have no significant impact on Teacher's Job Performance in Secondary School.
- HO4. Instructional supervision has no significant relationship with teacher's performance in Secondary Schools in Nasarawa state.
- HO5. Instructional supervision is not regularly conducted in secondary schools in Nasarawa state.

Research Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is the Descriptive Survey Method. This design was considered suitable for the study because it gives the researcher the opportunity of obtaining the opinion of the sampled population to infer the opinion of the entire population.

The total population of the study is made up of fifty eight Secondary Schools and Five Hundred and Twenty Five senior secondary school teachers in Nasarawa North Senatorial district during the 2012/2013 academic session. The population was chosen as a matter of the investigators research interest.

Simple Random Sampling Technique was used in the study. The basis for the selection was the Area Education Inspectorates in the Zone. The Schools in the Zone were grouped according the three Area Inspectorates offices in Akwanga, Nassarawa Eggon and Wamba, and a Simple Random Sampling method was used to select the Schools used for the study.

The sample size for study comprised ninety two teachers of Senior Secondary Classes in the sampled schools. The sample size was based on the number of questionnaires returned. Fifteen schools and Thirty Four Teachers were selected from each of the three Inspectorate Divisions and it availed every teacher the opportunity of being represented in the study based on the sampling technique used.

A Structured Questionnaire titled: Instructional Supervision on Students Academic Performance Questionnaire was used in obtaining relevant data for the study. The questionnaire items were face-validated to ascertain its suitability for use in data collection by an expert in this field. The language, contents and the structure of the items were critically examined and possible corrections and suggestions were made.

The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using a test –retest method. The reliability co-efficient of 0.974 and 0.928 were obtained respectively for the instrument using Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient in a pilot study conducted with twenty staff in two Secondary Schools. The calculated instrument reliability index was adjudged good and reliable for the study.

The research instrument was personally administered by hand to the Teachers in Senior Secondary of the selected Schools after obtaining permission to administer the instrument from the Principals of the Schools. Thirty Eight completed questionnaires were collected on the spot while the outstanding Sixty Four were collected within two weeks. The instrument was supported with available records of student's performance in English language and mathematics in SSCE for 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 in the Schools under study. The completed questionnaires were decoded into statistical data and analysed using t-test statistical tools and Pearson product moment correlation statistics {Pearson r } at 0.05 Level of Significance.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Findings

Research Question 1:

To what extent does regular instructional supervision have relationship with student's academic performance in Secondary School?

Table 1. Regular Supervision and Student's Academic Performance.

| Variables | N | Degree of freedom | r-cal | r-table | Findings |
|---|----|-------------------|-------|---------|-------------|
| Regular supervision Students 'Academic Performance | 92 | 90 | 0.972 | 0.205 | Significant |

Critical value at 0.05 significant level

Results of analysis in table 1 shows that the calculated r- value of Influence of regular instructional supervision on student's academic performance which is 0.972 is greater than the Critical value of 0.205 at 0.05 alpha level. The calculated correlation value reaffirmed that Regular Instructional Supervision has a measurable impact on student's academic performance in Nasarawa state.

Research Question 2:

What is the relationship between class visitations by Principals and students academic performance in Secondary School?

Table 2. Class Visitations by Principals and Students Academic Performance?

| Variables | N | Degree of freedom | r-cal | r-table | Findings |
|--|----|-------------------|-------|---------|-------------|
| Class visitation by principals Students' Academic Performance | 92 | 90 | 1.00 | 0.205 | Significant |

Critical value at 0.05 significant level

The r-calculated value 1.0 is higher than the r - table value 0.205 at 0.05 alpha level in table 2, the null hypothesis was rejected since there was a significant relationship between Class Visitations by Principal and Student's Academic Performance.

Research Question 3:

To what extent does a Positive/negative remark by Supervisors have impact on Teacher's Job Performance?

Table 3. Positive /negative remarks by supervisors and teacher's job performance.

| Variables | N | Degree of freedom | r-cal | r-table | Findings |
|---|----|-------------------|-------|---------|-------------|
| Positive/negative remark by supervisors Teachers job Performance | 92 | 90 | 0.320 | 0.205 | Significant |

Critical value at 0.05 significant level

In table 3, r-calculated value 0.670 is greater than the r-table value 0.205 at 0.05 alpha level, the result confirms that positive or negative remarks by supervisors have impacts on teachers job performance in Secondary School in Nasarawa state.

Research Question 4:

To what extent does regular instructional supervision have relationship with teacher's performance in Secondary Schools in Nasarawa state?

Table 4. Instructional supervision and teacher's performance.

| Variables | N | Degree of freedom | r-cal | r-table | Findings |
|---|----|-------------------|-------|---------|-------------|
| Regular instructional supervision Teachers Performance | 92 | 90 | 0.870 | 0.205 | Significant |

Critical value at 0.05 significant levels

The result obtained in response to research question 4 shows that the calculated r- value 0.870 at .005 level of significance which is greater than the critical value of 0.205 .The calculated correlation value reaffirmed that regular instructional supervision has a significant impact on teachers job performance in Nasarawa state.

Research Question 5:

How frequent is instructional supervision conducted in your school?

Table 5. Frequency of instructional supervision in school.

| Variable | N | No of schools | Daily % | Weekly % | Monthly % | Never % | Total % |
|-------------------------------------|----|---------------|---------|----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Frequency of supervision in schools | 92 | 37 | 11.4 | 29.4 | 48.8 | 10.4 | 100 |

The response of the teachers to the research question on the frequency of instructional supervision in their schools as indicated in table 5 shows that: 11% of the schools were supervised on daily basis, 29.4% weekly, 48.8% of the school received either internal or external supervisors monthly and 10.4% of the schools were not supervised at all during the 2012/2013 session in Nasarawa state.

Discussion of Findings.

The study investigated the impact of instructional supervision on the students' academic performance in SSCE in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Some of the findings were in harmony with the current theoretical state of art in the academic industry while some were at variance with the convectional status quo.

The result on regular instructional supervision and its bearing on students academic was significant and in support of National Policy on Education (2004).The result is was also in favour of Ebiringha's (1987) findings which indicated that instructional process and supervision make a difference in Secondary school students performance.

The study also revealed that there was a significant impact of class visitations by principals on students' academic performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State. This supports the finding of Harbison and Hanushek (1992), that there was a significant impact of class visitations by principals on students' academic performance in Secondary Schools in United States of America.

The findings of Ogunsaju (2006) and Osika (2002) in line with the result of this study suggested that

school Principal should focus on planning and preparation, lesson presentation, relationship and teacher's personality with reference to planning and preparation during classroom observation. He reiterated that the principal should be particular about the effectiveness of the teacher's communication—in his voice, choice of words and speech habits, the teachers' knowledge of the subject and his skills in effecting students' participation in the lesson.

The test on impact of positive/negative remarks by supervisors on teacher's performance was significant. This implies that good comments by supervisors during the supervision process have a measurable bearing in improving the teacher performance in the teaching –learning process. The analysis established a significant relationship between supervisory climate and improved teachers performance. The findings further indicated that negative comments by supervisors have an adverse effect on teacher's performance. It reveals that, if teachers develop apathy, negative attitude towards the administrator or supervisor because of his/her harsh method of approach, his/her performance will be lowered and this will affect his performance in the instructional process especially when the supervisor is with him/her.

The result on frequency of instructional supervision and its bearing on teacher's academic performance in Nasarawa state were significant. The findings was in line with NOUN (2006) which indicated that Instructional supervision constitutes the leverage point for instructional improvement, teacher's competence and efficiency of the educational system and is concerned with using methods, principles and practices of various techniques to establish, develop and execute the goals, policies, plans and procedures necessary to achieve educational goals.

Finally, the study reveals that despite the significant role instructional supervision plays in academic performance of students in Nasarawa state, the schools were not regularly supervised during the 2012/2013 session as such instructional processes were not closely monitored to ensure quality control in the teaching - learning process and this have affected the students performance in SSCE based on the fact that the Input is quality will always have the implication on the output of the Students.

Conclusion

Supervision is critical in the development of any educational program in both developed and developing countries including Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, the research revealed that the education system in Nasarawa state is plagued with multifarious problems notably are students poor performance in SSCE, poor attitude of teachers to work and non regular instructional supervision of schools as such, the challenges being currently faced by the educational system requires professional approach by experts in the educational field to improve and sustain the education industry in Nasarawa state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were suggested to improve school administration, develop teachers' professionalism through robust instructional supervision and improving secondary school student's academic performance:

1. A remedial mechanism should be developed and built into the school system by the Government, teachers, educational planners, policy makers, curriculum planners and parents. If quality education is to be achieved, a functional supervision mechanism involving parents should be built into the school system to ensure quality control and assurance from the system.
2. The Inspectorate Unit of the Ministry of Education should be properly staffed with qualified instructional supervision professional that are radical enough to articulate changes within the current supervision dynamics. Retired but strong Head teachers and teachers who have long years of on field experience can play a vital role in ameliorating school instructional challenges in Nasarawa state academic environment.
3. Regular evaluation of the instructional process, school administration procedure and educational outcomes by the supervisors so designated from within and outside the educational institution should be intensified so that conformities can be appreciated and improved upon while non conformities can be identified, sanctioned and corrected appropriately and timely.
4. Government should always be conscious of the implication of its policies and position on schooling and the multiplier effect on academic performance of students and teachers while Instructional Materials and other learning facilities to facilitate all round development of students should be made available and accessible for teachers to carry out their duties perfectly. More so, the free education programmes by the Government should be depoliticized, thoroughly planned and executed by education experts in view of the fact that the programme to some extent affects quality of education.
5. School administrators, government and professional bodies in the education sector should promote capacity development of teachers through intensive and regular seminars/workshops based on needs assessment of professional practices of teachers to improve their knowledge, pedagogical skills and competence in various subjects, with a view to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning processes in secondary schools.

It is hoped that if the above recommendations are thoroughly and effectively considered, students' performance in schools will improve. Moreover, the problem of quality of the Secondary school products and standards of education would likewise be addressed by employing the best teaching – learning practices in Nasarawa state.

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